

WEEK STARTING APRIL 21

Song 132 and Prayer

☐ **Congregation Bible Study:**

c/ chap. 6 ¶1-8 (30 min.)

☐ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Exodus 15-18 (10 min.)

No. 1: Exodus 15:20–16:5 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Why Christians Are Not Required to Keep the Sabbath—rs pp. 345-346 ¶3 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abortion—Life Is a Precious Gift From God—*it-1* p. 28 (5 min.)

☐ **Service Meeting:**

Song 27

10 min: “Congregate the People.” Questions and answers.

10 min: “A Special Invitation.” Questions and answers. Give all in attendance an invitation, if available, and discuss its contents. Inform the congregation when their campaign will begin, and outline local arrangements for covering the territory. Have a brief demonstration.

10 min: “Maintain Your Conduct Fine Among the Nations.” Questions and answers. Also discuss applicable points from “2014 Convention Reminders” and the letter to all congregations dated August 3, 2013, regarding safety precautions when attending spiritual programs.

Song 125 and Prayer

“Congregate the People”

¹ Shortly after leaving Egypt, Jehovah instructed Moses to “congregate the people” at Mount Sinai to hear His words so that they might fear Him and instruct their sons in His ways. (Deut. 4:10-13) What a memorable and faith-strengthening occasion that must have been! During the next few months, Jehovah’s people will gather at district and international conventions to be instructed by Jehovah. What must we do in order to benefit to the full?

² **“Be Ready”:** Jehovah commanded the Israelites to “be ready” for that historic gathering at Mount Sinai. (Ex. 19:10, 11) Likewise, careful preparation is needed by all who will attend the conventions, not just by those who will have a part on the program. For example, many will need to arrange to take time off from their secular job. Perhaps your situation is similar to Nehemiah’s. He wanted to leave his work as King Artaxerxes’ cupbearer in order to go to Je-

1. District and international conventions have what similarities to a momentous gathering of the Israelites shortly after they left Egypt?

2. What must we do to “be ready” for our convention?

2014 Convention Reminders

■ **Program Times:** The doors to the building will open at 8:00 a.m. The introductory music will begin at 9:20 a.m. all three days. At that time, all of us should go to our seats so that the program can begin in a dignified manner. The closing song and prayer will be introduced at 4:55 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and at 3:50 p.m. on Sunday.

■ **International Conventions:** Some areas will host international conventions. Keep in mind that the branch office has invited specific congregations and foreign delegates after carefully calculating the number of seats, parking spaces, and hotel rooms available. Overcrowding may occur if publishers attend an international convention to which

they have not been invited. If circumstances require you to attend a convention other than the one to which you are assigned, you should not choose an international convention.

■ **Parking:** At all convention sites where we control the parking, the spaces will be available at no charge on a first-come, first-served basis. Parking is usually limited, so carpooling should be done to the extent possible. Only those with a license plate or placard for the disabled will be allowed to park in the area reserved for such ones.

■ **Seat Saving:** When the doors to the facility are opened each morning, please do not rush to the seating area of your preference as if competing with fellow attenders. A self-sacrificing spirit that moves us to seek the

A Victory Song

(Exodus 15:1)

1. Sing to Jehovah. His great name is highly exalted.
 His proud Egyptian foes, He has cast into the sea.
 Praise Jah Almighty;
 Besides him there can be no other.
 Jehovah is his name;
 He has gained the victory.

(CHORUS)

*Jehovah God, Most High over all,
 The one from time indefinite the same,
 You soon will cause your enemies to fall
 And sanctify your holy name.*

2. See now all nations Opposing the Sov'reign, Jehovah.
 Though mightier than Pharaoh,
 They too will suffer shame.
 Doom now awaits them;
 They will not survive Armageddon.
 Soon ev'ryone will know
 That Jehovah is God's name.

(Chorus)

Destructive Power—“Jehovah Is a Manly Person of War”

THE Israelites were trapped—wedged between forbidding mountain cliffs and an impassable sea. The Egyptian army, a ruthless killing machine, was in hot pursuit, determined to annihilate them.* Still, Moses urged God’s people not to lose hope. “Jehovah will himself fight for you,” he assured them.—Exodus 14:14.

² Even so, Moses apparently called out to Jehovah, and God responded: “Why do you keep crying out to me? . . . Lift up your rod and stretch your hand out over the sea and split it apart.” (Exodus 14:15, 16) Just picture the unfolding of events. Jehovah immediately commands his angel, and the pillar of cloud moves to Israel’s rear, perhaps spreading out like a wall and blocking the Egyptian line of attack. (Exodus 14:19, 20; Psalm 105:39) Moses stretches out his hand. Driven by a strong wind, the sea splits apart. The waters somehow congeal and stand up like walls, opening up a path wide enough to accommodate the entire nation!—Exodus 14:21; 15:8.

³ Faced with this display of might, Pharaoh should order his troops home. Instead, prideful Pharaoh orders an attack. (Exodus 14:23) The Egyptians rush into the seabed in pursuit, but their charge soon dissolves into chaos as the wheels of their chariots begin falling off. Once the

* According to Jewish historian Josephus, the Hebrews were “pursued by 600 chariots along with 50,000 horsemen and heavy infantry to the number of 200,000.”—*Jewish Antiquities*, II, 324 [xv, 3].

1-3. (a) What threat did the Israelites face at the hands of the Egyptians? (b) How did Jehovah fight for his people?



Israelites are safe on the other side, Jehovah commands Moses: "Stretch your hand out over the sea, that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, their war chariots and their cavalrymen." The watery walls collapse, burying Pharaoh and his forces!—Exodus 14:24-28; Psalm 136:15.

⁴ The deliverance of the nation of Israel at the Red Sea was a momentous event in the history of God's dealings with mankind. There Jehovah proved himself to be "a manly person of war." (Exodus 15:3) How, though, do you react to this portrayal of Jehovah? To be honest, war has brought much pain and misery to humankind. Could it be that God's use of destructive power seems more like a deterrent than an incentive to your drawing close to him?

Divine War Versus Human Conflicts

⁵ Nearly three hundred times in the Hebrew Scriptures and twice in the Christian Greek Scriptures, God is given the title "Jehovah of armies." (1 Samuel 1:11) As Sovereign Ruler, Jehovah commands a vast army of angelic forces. (Joshua 5:13-15; 1 Kings 22:19) The destructive potential of this army is awesome. (Isaiah 37:36) The destruction of humans is not pleasant to contemplate. However, we must remember that God's wars are unlike petty human conflicts. Military and political leaders may try to attribute noble motives to their aggression. But human war invariably involves greed and selfishness.

⁶ In contrast, Jehovah is not driven by blind emotion.

4. (a) What did Jehovah prove to be at the Red Sea? (b) How might some react to this portrayal of Jehovah?

5, 6. (a) Why is God appropriately called "Jehovah of armies"? (b) How does divine warfare differ from human warfare?

***At the Red Sea, Jehovah proved himself to be
"a manly person of war"***

Deuteronomy 32:4 declares: “The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he.” God’s Word condemns unbridled rage, cruelty, and violence. (Genesis 49:7; Psalm 11:5) So Jehovah never acts without reason. He uses his destructive power sparingly and as a last resort. It is as he stated through his prophet Ezekiel: “‘Do I take any delight at all in the death of someone wicked,’ is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, ‘and not in that he should turn back from his ways and actually keep living?’”—Ezekiel 18:23.

⁷ Why, then, does Jehovah use destructive power? Before answering, we might call to mind the righteous man Job. Satan challenged whether Job—really, any human—would keep his integrity under trial. Jehovah answered that challenge by allowing Satan to test Job’s integrity. As a result, Job suffered illness, loss of wealth, and loss of his children. (Job 1:1–2:8) Unaware of the issues involved, Job mistakenly concluded that his suffering was unjust punishment from God. He asked God why He had made him a “target,” “an enemy.”—Job 7:20; 13:24.

⁸ A young man named Elihu exposed the flaw in Job’s reasoning, saying: “You have said, ‘My righteousness is more than God’s.’” (Job 35:2) Yes, it is unwise to think that we know better than God or to assume that he has behaved unfairly. “Far be it from the true God to act wickedly, and the Almighty to act unjustly,” Elihu declared. Later, he said: “As for the Almighty, we have not found him out; he is exalted in power, and justice and abundance of righteousness he will not belittle.” (Job 34:10; 36:22, 23; 37:23) We can be sure that when God fights,

7, 8. (a) What did Job mistakenly conclude about his sufferings? (b) How did Elihu correct Job’s thinking in this regard? (c) What lesson can we learn from Job’s experience?

he has good cause for doing so. With that in mind, let us explore some of the reasons why the God of peace sometimes assumes the mantle of a warrior.—1 Corinthians 14:33.

Why the God of Peace Is Compelled to Fight

⁹ After praising God as "a manly person of war," Moses declared: "Who among the gods is like you, O Jehovah? Who is like you, proving yourself mighty in holiness?" (Exodus 15:11) The prophet Habakkuk similarly wrote: "You are too pure in eyes to see what is bad; and to look on trouble you are not able." (Habakkuk 1:13) Although Jehovah is a God of love, he is also a God of holiness, righteousness, and justice. At times, such qualities compel him to use his destructive power. (Isaiah 59:15-19; Luke 18:7) So God does not blemish his holiness when he fights. Rather, he fights *because* he is holy.—Exodus 39:30.

¹⁰ Consider the situation that arose after the first human couple, Adam and Eve, rebelled against God. (Genesis 3:1-6) Had he tolerated their unrighteousness, Jehovah would have undermined his own position as Universal Sovereign. As a righteous God, he was obliged to sentence them to death. (Romans 6:23) In the first Bible prophecy, he foretold that enmity would exist between his own servants and the followers of the "serpent," Satan. (Revelation 12:9; Genesis 3:15) Ultimately, this enmity could only be resolved by the crushing of Satan. (Romans 16:20) But that judgment act would result in great blessings for righteous mankind, ridding the earth of Satan's influence and opening the way to a global paradise.

9. Why does the God of peace fight?

10. (a) When and how did the need for God to wage war first arise?
 (b) How only could the enmity foretold at Genesis 3:15 be resolved, and with what benefits to righteous mankind?

19 Then the angel of the true God^a who was going ahead of the camp of Israel departed and went to their rear, and the pillar of cloud that was in front of them moved to the rear and stood behind them.^b 20 So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel.^c On the one side, it was a dark cloud. On the other side, it was lighting up the night.^d So the one camp did not come near the other camp all night long.

21 Moses now stretched out his hand over the sea;^e and Jehovah drove the sea back with a strong east wind all night long, turning the sea basin into dry ground,^f and the waters divided.^g 22 So the Israelites went through the midst of the sea on dry ground,^h while the waters formed a wall on their right hand and on their left.ⁱ 23 The Egyptians pursued them, and all Phar'ao's horses, his war chariots, and his cavalymen began going after them into the midst of the sea.^j 24 During the morning watch,^{*} Jehovah looked at the camp of the Egyptians from within the pillar of fire and cloud,^k and he threw the camp of the Egyptians into confusion. 25 He kept taking wheels off their chariots so that they were driving them with difficulty, and the Egyptians were saying: "Let us flee from any contact with Israel, because Jehovah is fighting for them against the Egyptians."^l

26 Then Jehovah said to Moses: "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, their war chariots, and their cavalymen." 27 Moses at once stretched out his hand over the sea, and as morning approached,

14:24 *That is, about 2:00 a.m. until 6:00 a.m.

CHAP. 14

- a Ge 48:16
- Ex 32:34
- Nu 20:16
- Jude 9
- b Ex 13:21
- c Jos 24:6, 7
- d Ps 105:39
- e Ex 14:16
- Ac 7:36
- f Jos 2:9, 10
- Ps 66:6
- Ps 106:9
- Ps 114:3
- g Ne 9:10, 11
- Ps 78:13
- Ps 136:13
- Isa 63:12
- h 1Co 10:1
- Heb 11:29
- i Ex 15:8
- j Ex 14:17
- k Ex 13:21
- l Ex 14:4

Second Col.

- a Ex 15:1, 4
- b Ex 15:5, 10
- De 11:3, 4
- Jos 24:6, 7
- Ne 9:10, 11
- Ps 78:53
- Heb 11:29
- c Ex 14:13
- Ps 106:11
- Ps 136:15
- d Ps 77:19
- e Ex 15:8
- f De 4:20
- Ps 106:8-11
- g Ex 4:31
- Ex 19:9
- Ps 106:12

CHAP. 15

- h Jg 5:1
- 2Sa 22:1
- Re 15:3
- i Ex 9:16
- Ex 18:10, 11
- Ps 106:11, 12
- j Ex 15:21
- Ps 136:15
- k Isa 12:2
- l 2Sa 22:47
- Isa 25:1
- m Ex 3:15
- n Ps 83:18
- Ps 148:13
- o Ps 24:8
- p Ex 6:3
- Isa 42:8
- q Ex 14:27
- r Ex 14:6, 7
- s Ne 9:10, 11

the sea returned to its normal condition. As the Egyptians fled from it, Jehovah shook the Egyptians off into the midst of the sea.^a 28 The returning waters covered the war chariots and the cavalymen and all of Phar'ao's army who had gone into the sea after them.^b Not so much as one among them was allowed to survive.^c

29 But the Israelites walked on dry ground in the midst of the seabed,^d and the waters formed a wall on their right hand and on their left.^e 30 Thus Jehovah saved Israel on that day from the hand of the Egyptians,^f and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. 31 Israel also saw the great power^{*} that Jehovah wielded against the Egyptians, and the people began to fear Jehovah and to put faith in Jehovah and in his servant Moses.^g

15 At that time Moses and the Israelites sang this song to Jehovah:^h

"Let me sing to Jehovah, for he has become highly exalted.ⁱ

The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea.^j

2 My strength and my might is Jah,^{*} since he has become my salvation.^k

This is my God, and I will praise him;^l my father's God,^m and I will exalt him.ⁿ

3 Jehovah is a powerful warrior.^o Jehovah is his name.^p

4 Phar'ao's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea,^q

And his finest warriors have sunk into the Red Sea.^r

5 The surging waters covered them; down into the depths they sank like a stone.^s

14:31 *Lit., "hand." 15:2 *"Jah" is a shortened form of the name Jehovah.

- 6** Your right hand, O Jehovah, is great in power;^a
Your right hand, O Jehovah, can shatter an enemy.
- 7** In your great majesty you can throw down those who rise up against you;^b
You send out your burning anger, it eats them up like stubble.
- 8** By a breath from your nostrils waters massed together;
They stood still, holding back the floods;
The surging waters congealed in the heart of the sea.
- 9** The enemy said: 'I will pursue! I will overtake!
I will divide spoil until I am* satisfied!
I will draw my sword! My hand will subdue them!'^c
- 10** You blew with your breath, the sea covered them;^d
They sank like lead in majestic waters.
- 11** Who among the gods is like you, O Jehovah?^e
Who is like you, showing yourself mighty in holiness?^f
The One to be feared with songs of praise, the One doing wonders.^g
- 12** You stretched out your right hand, and the earth swallowed them up.^h
- 13** In your loyal love you have led the people whom you have redeemed;ⁱ
In your strength you will guide them to your holy place of dwelling.
- 14** Peoples must hear;^j they will shudder;
Anguish* will seize the inhabitants of Phi-lis'ti-a.

15:9 *Or "my soul is." **15:14** *Lit., "Birth pangs."

CHAP. 15

- a Ps 60:5
Ps 89:13
- b Isa 37:23
- c Ex 14:5, 9
- d Ex 14:21, 28
- e De 3:24
2Sa 7:22
- f Isa 6:3
- g Ex 11:9
- h Ps 78:53
Heb 11:29
- i Ps 106:10
- j Nu 14:13, 14
- Second Col.
- a Nu 22:1, 3
- b Jos 2:9-11
Jos 5:1
- c De 11:25
- d 2Sa 7:23
Isa 43:1
- e Nu 20:14, 17
Nu 21:21, 22
- f Ps 80:8
- g Ps 10:16
- h Ex 14:23
- i Ex 14:28
- j Ex 14:22
- k Ex 9:16
Ex 18:11
- l Ex 14:27, 28
Ps 106:11, 12

- 15** At that time the sheikhs* of E'dom will be terrified,
And trembling will take hold of the mighty rulers[#] of Mo'ab.^a
All the inhabitants of Ca'-naan will be disheartened.^b
- 16** Fear and dread will fall upon them.^c
Because of the greatness of your arm they will be as motionless as a stone
Until your people pass by, O Jehovah,
Until the people whom you produced^d pass by.^e
- 17** You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of your inheritance,^f
The established place that you have prepared for yourself to inhabit, O Jehovah,
A sanctuary, O Jehovah, that your hands have established.
- 18** Jehovah will rule as king forever and ever.^g
- 19** When Phar'aoh's horses with his war chariots and his cavalymen went into the sea,^h
Then Jehovah brought back the waters of the sea upon them,ⁱ
But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the midst of the sea."^j
- 20** Then Mir'i-am the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her with tambourines and with dances.
- 21** Mir'i-am sang in response to the men:
"Sing to Jehovah, for he has become highly exalted.^k
The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea."^l

15:15 *A sheikh was a tribal chief. [#]Or "the despots."

22 Moses later led Israel away from the Red Sea, and they went out to the wilderness of Shur and marched on for three days in the wilderness, but they did not find water. 23 They came to Ma'rah,^a but they were not able to drink the water from Ma'rah because it was bitter. That is why he named it Ma'rah. 24 So the people began to murmur against Moses,^b saying: "What are we to drink?" 25 He cried out to Jehovah,^c and Jehovah directed him to a tree. When he threw it into the water, the water became sweet.

There He established for them a regulation and a case for judgment, and there He put them to the test.^d 26 He said: "If you will strictly listen to the voice of Jehovah your God and will do what is right in his eyes and will pay attention to his commandments and keep all his regulations,^e I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians,^f for I, Jehovah, am healing you."^g

27 After that they came to E'lim, where there were 12 springs of water and 70 palm trees. So they camped there by the water.

16 After they departed from E'lim, the entire assembly of the Israelites eventually came to the wilderness of Sin,^h which is between E'lim and Si'nai, on the 15th day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt.

2 Then the entire assembly of the Israelites began to murmur against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.ⁱ 3 The Israelites kept saying to them: "If only we had died by Jehovah's hand in the land of Egypt while we were sitting by the pots of meat,^j while we were eat-

CHAP. 15

- a Nu 33:8
- b Ex 16:2, 3
Ex 17:3
1Co 10:6, 10
- c Ex 17:4
- d Ex 16:4
De 8:2
- e De 28:1
- f De 7:12, 15
- g Ex 23:25
Ps 103:3

CHAP. 16

- h Nu 33:10, 11
- i Ex 15:24
1Co 10:6, 10
- j Nu 11:4
Nu 14:2, 3

Second Col.

- a Ex 17:3
Nu 16:13
- b Ps 78:24, 25
Ps 105:40
Joh 6:31, 32
Joh 6:58
1Co 10:1, 3
- c Mt 6:11
- d De 8:2
- e Ex 35:2
- f Ex 16:22
- g Ex 6:7
Nu 16:28, 29
- h Nu 21:7
1Sa 8:7
- i Ex 16:2
Nu 11:1
- j Ex 13:21
Nu 16:19
Mt 17:5
- k Nu 14:27

ing bread to satisfaction. Now you have brought us out into this wilderness to put this whole congregation to death by famine."^a

4 Then Jehovah said to Moses: "Here I am raining down bread for you from the heavens,^b and each of the people should go out to gather his amount day by day,^c so that I may put them to the test to see whether they will walk in my law or not.^d 5 But on the sixth day^e when they prepare what they have gathered, it is to be double the amount that they pick up on each of the other days."^f

6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites: "In the evening you will certainly know that it is Jehovah who brought you out of the land of Egypt.^g 7 In the morning you will see Jehovah's glory, for he has heard your murmurings against Jehovah. Who are we that you should murmur against us?" 8 Moses continued: "When Jehovah gives you meat to eat in the evening and in the morning bread to satisfaction, you will see that Jehovah has heard your murmurings that you are murmuring against him. But who are we? Your murmurings are not against us, but against Jehovah."^h

9 Then Moses said to Aaron: "Tell the entire assembly of the Israelites, 'Come near before Jehovah, for he has heard your murmurings.'"ⁱ 10 As soon as Aaron had spoken to the entire assembly of the Israelites, they turned and faced toward the wilderness, and look! Jehovah's glory appeared in the cloud.^j

11 Jehovah spoke further to Moses, saying: 12 "I have heard the murmurings of the Israelites.^k Tell them, 'At twilight* you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be satisfied

15:23 *Meaning "Bitterness."

16:12 *Lit., "Between the two evenings."

with bread,^a and you will certainly know that I am Jehovah your God.”^b

13 So that evening quail came and covered the camp,^c and in the morning a layer of dew was all around the camp. **14** When the layer of dew evaporated, there was a fine, flaky substance on the surface of the wilderness,^d as fine as frost on the ground. **15** When the Israelites saw it, they began to say to one another, “What is it?” for they did not know what it was. Moses said to them: “It is the bread that Jehovah has given you for food.”^e **16** This is what Jehovah has commanded, ‘Each one should gather it according to how much he can eat. You are to take an omer measure^{*f} for each individual according to the number of the people^g that each of you has in his tent.’” **17** The Israelites began to do so; they gathered it, some gathering much and some gathering little. **18** When they would measure it by the omer, the one who had gathered much had no surplus and the one who had gathered little had no shortage.^g They each gathered it according to what they could eat.

19 Then Moses said to them: “Nobody should leave any of it until the morning.”^h **20** But they did not listen to Moses. When some men left some of it until the morning, it bred worms and stank, and Moses became indignant at them. **21** They would pick it up morning by morning, each one according to what he could eat. When the sun got hot, it melted.

22 On the sixth day, they picked up twice as much bread,ⁱ two omer measures for each person. So all the chieftains of the assembly came and reported it

16:16 *About 2.2 L (2 dry qt). See App. B14. ^aOr “souls.”

CHAP. 16

a Ps 105:40

b Ex 4:5
Ex 6:7

c Nu 11:31, 34
Ps 78:27-29

d Nu 11:7
De 8:3
Ne 9:15

e Nu 21:5
De 8:14, 16
Jos 5:11, 12
Joh 6:31, 32
Joh 6:58
1Co 10:1, 3

f Ex 16:36

g 2Co 8:15

h Mt 6:11, 34

i Ex 16:5

Second Col.

a Ex 20:8
Ex 31:15
Ex 35:2
Le 23:3

b Nu 11:7, 8

c Ex 20:9, 10
Ex 31:13
De 5:15

d Nu 14:11
Ps 78:10
Ps 106:13

e Ex 31:13

f Le 23:3
De 5:13, 14

g Ex 16:15
Nu 11:7

h Ps 105:5, 40

to Moses. **23** At that he said to them: “It is what Jehovah has said. Tomorrow there will be a complete rest,^{*} a holy sabbath to Jehovah.^a Bake what you need to bake, and boil what you need to boil;^b then save whatever is left over and keep it until the morning.” **24** So they saved it until the morning, just as Moses had commanded, and it did not stink nor were there maggots in it. **25** Then Moses said: “Eat it today, because today is a sabbath to Jehovah. Today you will not find it on the ground. **26** You will pick it up for six days, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath,^c there will be none.” **27** However, some of the people did go out to pick it up on the seventh day, but they found nothing.

28 So Jehovah said to Moses: “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws?^d **29** Take notice of the fact that Jehovah has given you the Sabbath.^e That is why he is giving you the bread for two days on the sixth day. Everyone must stay where he is; nobody is to leave his locality on the seventh day.” **30** So the people observed the Sabbath^{*} on the seventh day.^f

31 The house of Israel named the bread “manna.”^{**} It was white like coriander seed, and its taste was like that of flat cakes with honey.^g **32** Then Moses said: “This is what Jehovah has commanded, ‘Fill an omer measure of it as something to be kept throughout your generations,^h so that they may see the bread that I gave you to eat in the wilderness when I was bringing you out of the land of Egypt.’” **33** So Moses said to Aaron:

16:23 *Or “a sabbath observance.”

16:30 *Or “rested.” **16:31** *Probably from the Hebrew expression “What is it?”

“Take a jar and put in it an omer measure of manna and deposit it before Jehovah as something to be kept throughout your generations.”^a **34** Just as Jehovah commanded Moses, Aaron placed it before the Testimony^b so that it might be preserved. **35** The Israelites ate the manna for 40 years,^c until they came to a land that was inhabited.^d They ate the manna until they came to the frontier of the land of Ca’naan.^e **36** Now an omer is a tenth of an e’phah measure.*

17 The entire assembly of the Israelites departed from the wilderness of Sin^f by stages according to the order of Jehovah,^g and they camped at Reph’i-dim.^h But there was no water for the people to drink.

2 So the people began quarreling with Mosesⁱ and saying: “Give us water to drink.” But Moses said to them: “Why are you quarreling with me? Why do you keep putting Jehovah to the test?”^j **3** But the people were very thirsty for water there, and they kept murmuring against Moses^k and saying: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our sons and our livestock with thirst?” **4** Finally Moses cried out to Jehovah: “What should I do with this people? A little longer and they will stone me!”

5 Then Jehovah said to Moses: “Go ahead of the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel and your rod with which you struck the Nile River.^l Take it in your hand and walk on. **6** Look! I will be standing before you there on the rock in Ho’reb. You must strike the rock, and water will come out of it, and the people will drink it.”^m Moses did so before the eyes of the elders

16:36 *An ephah equaled 22 L (20 dry qt). See App. B14.

CHAP. 16

- a Heb 9:4
- b Ex 27:21
- c De 8:2
Ne 9:21
Ps 78:24
- d Jos 5:11,12
- e Nu 33:48
De 34:1

CHAP. 17

- f Nu 33:12
- g Nu 33:2
- h Nu 33:14
- i Ex 5:19,21
Nu 14:2,3
Nu 20:3
- j Nu 14:22
Ps 78:18,22
Ps 106:14
- k Ex 16:2,3
- l Ex 7:20
- m Nu 20:8
De 8:14,15
Ne 9:15
Ps 78:15
Ps 105:41
1Co 10:1,4

Second Col.

- a De 9:22
- b Ps 81:7
- c De 6:16
Ps 95:8,9
Heb 3:8,9
- d Ge 36:12
- e De 25:17
1Sa 15:2
- f Nu 11:28
- g Jos 11:15
- h Ex 24:13,14
- i Jos 11:12
- j Nu 24:20
De 25:19
1Ch 4:42,43
- k Re 19:1
- l 1Sa 15:20
Es 9:24

CHAP. 18

- m Ex 2:16,21
Ex 3:1

of Israel. **7** So he named the place Mas’sah^{*a} and Mer’i-bah^{#b} because of the quarreling of the Israelites and because they put Jehovah to the test^c by saying: “Is Jehovah in our midst or not?”

8 Then the A-mal’ek-ites^d came and fought against Israel in Reph’i-dim.^e **9** At this Moses said to Joshua:^f “Choose men for us and go out to fight against the A-mal’ek-ites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill, with the rod of the true God in my hand.” **10** Then Joshua did just as Moses told him,^g and he fought against the A-mal’ek-ites. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur^h went up to the top of the hill.

11 As long as Moses kept his hands lifted up, the Israelites prevailed, but as soon as he would let down his hands, the A-mal’ek-ites prevailed. **12** When the hands of Moses were heavy, they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. Then Aaron and Hur, one on each side, supported his hands, so that his hands remained steady until the sun set. **13** Thus Joshua defeated Am’a-lek and his people with the sword.ⁱ

14 Jehovah now said to Moses: “Write this as a memorial* in the book and repeat it to Joshua, ‘I will completely wipe out the memory of Am’a-lek from under the heavens.’”^j **15** Then Moses built an altar and named it Jeho’vah-nis’^{si},* **16** saying: “Because his hand is against the throne of Jah,^k Jehovah will have war with Am’a-lek from generation to generation.”^l

18 Now Jeth’ro the priest of Mid’i-an, Moses’ father-in-law,^m heard about all that God had done for Moses and

17:7 *Meaning “Testing; Trial.” #Meaning “Quarreling.” 17:14 *Or “reminder.” 17:15 *Meaning “Jehovah Is My Signal Pole.”

for his people Israel, how Jehovah had brought Israel out of Egypt.^a **2** Jeth'ro, Moses' father-in-law, had taken in Zip-po'rah, Moses' wife, when she was sent back to him, **3** along with her two sons.^b One son was named Ger'shom,^{*c} because Moses said, "I have become a foreign resident in a foreign land," **4** and the other was named Eli-e'zer,^{*} because he said, "The God of my father is my helper, who rescued me from Phar'aoh's sword."^d

5 So Jeth'ro, Moses' father-in-law, along with Moses' sons and his wife, came to Moses into the wilderness where he was camping at the mountain of the true God.^e **6** Then he sent word to Moses: "I, your father-in-law Jeth'ro,^f am coming to you with your wife and her two sons." **7** At once Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and he bowed down and kissed him. Each of them asked about the other's welfare, and then they went into the tent.

8 Moses related to his father-in-law all that Jehovah had done to Phar'aoh and Egypt in behalf of Israel,^g all the hardships that had befallen them along the way,^h and how Jehovah had delivered them. **9** Jeth'ro rejoiced over all the good that Jehovah had done for Israel by rescuing them from Egypt.^{*} **10** Then Jeth'ro said: "Praised be Jehovah, who rescued you from Egypt and from Phar'aoh, and who rescued the people from under Egypt's control. **11** Now I know that Jehovah is greater than all the other gods,ⁱ because of what he did to those who acted arrogantly against his people." **12** Then Jeth'ro, Mo-

18:3 *Meaning "A Foreign Resident There." **18:4** *Meaning "My God Is Helper." **18:9** *Lit., "from the hand of Egypt."

CHAP. 18

a Jos 2:9,10
Jos 9:3,9

b Ac 7:29

c Ex 2:22

d Ex 2:15

e Ex 19:2
IKI 19:8,9

f Ex 4:18
Nu 10:29

g Ex 7:3
Ex 14:27,28
De 4:34

h Ex 15:22
Ex 16:3

i Ex 15:11
Ps 95:3
Ps 97:9

Second Col.

a De 4:5
De 5:1

b Jos 1:5,17

c Ex 20:19

d Nu 27:1-5

e De 7:11

f Nu 11:16,17
De 1:13
Ac 6:3

g Ex 23:8
ITi 3:2,3
Tit 1:7
1Pe 5:2

h De 1:15
Ac 14:23

ses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and sacrifices for God, and Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat a meal with Moses' father-in-law before the true God.

13 On the next day, Moses sat down as usual to serve as judge for the people, and the people kept standing before Moses from morning until evening.

14 When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said: "What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit here alone with all the people standing before you from morning until evening?" **15** Moses said to his father-in-law: "Because the people keep coming to me to inquire of God. **16** When a case arises, it comes to me and I must judge between one person and the other, and I make known the decisions of the true God and his laws."^a

17 Moses' father-in-law said to him: "What you are doing is not good. **18** You will surely wear out, both you and this people who are with you, because this is too big a load for you and you cannot carry it by yourself. **19** Now listen to me. I will give you advice, and God will be with you.^b You serve as representative for the people before the true God,^c and you must bring the cases to the true God.^d **20** You should warn them about what the regulations and the laws are^e and make known to them the way in which they should walk and the work that they should do. **21** But you should select from the people capable men^f fearing God, trustworthy men hating dishonest profit,^g and appoint these over them as chiefs over thousands, chiefs over hundreds, chiefs over fifties, and chiefs over tens.^h **22** They should judge the people when

cases arise,* and they will bring every difficult case to you,^a but every minor case they will decide. Make it easier for yourself by letting them share the load along with you.^b **23** If you do this, and God so commands you, you will be able to stand the strain, and everyone will go home satisfied."

24 Moses immediately listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. **25** Moses chose capable men out of all Israel and appointed them heads over the people, as chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, and chiefs of tens. **26** So they judged the people when cases arose. A difficult case they would bring to Moses,^c but every minor case they would judge. **27** After that Moses saw his father-in-law off,^d and he went his way to his land.

19 In the third month after the Israelites went out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the wilderness of Si'nai. **2** They pulled away from Reph'i-dim^e and came to the wilderness of Si'nai and camped in the wilderness. Israel camped there in front of the mountain.^f

3 Then Moses went up to the true God, and Jehovah called to him from the mountain,^g saying: "This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and to tell the Israelites, **4** 'You have seen for yourselves what I did to the Egyptians,^h in order to carry you on wings of eagles and bring you to myself.ⁱ **5** Now if you will strictly obey my voice and keep my covenant, you will certainly become my special property* out of all peoples,^j for the whole earth belongs to me.^k **6** You will become to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'^l These

18:22 *Lit., "in every time." 19:5 *Or "treasured possession."

CHAP. 18

a Le 24:10, 11
Nu 15:32, 33
De 1:17

b Nu 11:17

c Ac 15:2

d Nu 10:29

CHAP. 19

e Ex 17:1

f Ex 3:1, 12

g Ac 7:38

h De 4:34

i De 32:11, 12
Isa 63:9

j 1Ki 8:53
Ps 135:4

k De 10:14

l Le 11:44
De 7:6
1Pe 2:9
Re 5:9, 10

Second Col.

a Ex 24:3

b Ex 24:7
Jos 24:24

c Heb 12:20

d Ex 20:18

e Ex 19:10

are the words that you are to say to the Israelites."

7 So Moses went and summoned the elders of the people and declared to them all these words that Jehovah had commanded him.^a **8** After that all the people answered unanimously: "All that Jehovah has spoken, we are willing to do."^b Moses immediately took the people's response to Jehovah. **9** And Jehovah said to Moses: "Look! I am coming to you in a dark cloud, so that the people may hear when I speak with you and so that they may always put faith in you as well." Then Moses reported the words of the people to Jehovah.

10 Then Jehovah said to Moses: "Go to the people and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and they must wash their clothing. **11** And they must be ready for the third day, because on the third day Jehovah will come down upon Mount Si'nai before the eyes of all the people. **12** You must set boundaries for the people all around it and tell them, 'Beware of going up to the mountain or touching its border. Anybody touching the mountain will surely be put to death. **13** No hand is to touch him, but he will either be stoned or be shot through.* Whether beast or man, he will not live.'^c But at the sound of the ram's horn^d they may come up to the mountain."

14 Then Moses went down from the mountain to the people, and he began to sanctify the people, and they washed their clothing.^e **15** He said to the people: "Get ready for the third day. Abstain from sexual relations."^{**}

16 On the morning of the third day, there was thunder and

19:13 *Perhaps shot with an arrow. 19:15 *Lit., "Do not approach a woman."

kingdom.’ And he said to him: ‘Truly I tell you today, You will be with me in Paradise.’” (Under Jesus’ rule, all the earth will become a paradise; the dead who are in God’s memory will be raised with an opportunity to enjoy perfect life on earth forever.)

See also pages 234-239, under the heading “Last Days.”

Sabbath

Definition: Sabbath is taken from the Hebrew *sha-vath'*, meaning “rest, cease, desist.” The sabbatical system prescribed in the Mosaic Law included a weekly Sabbath day, a number of additional specified days throughout each year, the seventh year, and the fiftieth year. The weekly Sabbath of the Jews, the seventh day of their calendar week, is from sunset on Friday until sunset on Saturday. Many professed Christians have traditionally kept Sunday as their day of rest and of worship; others have adhered to the day set aside on the Jewish calendar.

Are Christians under obligation to keep a weekly sabbath day?

Ex. 31:16, 17: “The sons of Israel must keep the sabbath, so as to carry out the sabbath during their generations. It is a covenant to time indefinite [“a perpetual covenant,” *RS*]. Between me and the sons of Israel it is a sign to time indefinite.” (Notice that sabbath observance was a sign between Jehovah and Israel; this would not be the case if everyone else were also obligated to keep the Sabbath. The Hebrew word rendered “perpetual” in *RS* is '*oh-lam'*, which basically means a period of time that, from the standpoint of the present, is indefinite or hidden from sight but of long duration. That can mean forever, but not necessarily so. At Numbers 25:13 the same Hebrew word is applied to the priesthood, which later ended, according to Hebrews 7:12.)

Rom. 10:4: “Christ is the end of the Law, so that everyone exercising faith may have righteousness.” (Sabbath keeping was a part of that Law. God used Christ to bring that Law to its end. Our having a righteous standing with God depends on faith in Christ, not on keeping

a weekly sabbath.) (Also Galatians 4:9-11; Ephesians 2:13-16)

Col. 2:13-16: “[God] kindly forgave us all our trespasses and blotted out the handwritten document against us, which consisted of decrees and which was in opposition to us . . . Therefore let no man judge you in eating and drinking or in respect of a festival or of an observance of the new moon or of a sabbath.” (If a person was under the Mosaic Law and was judged guilty of profaning the Sabbath, he was to be stoned to death by the whole congregation, according to Exodus 31:14 and Numbers 15:32-35. Many who argue for sabbath keeping have reason to be glad that we are not under that Law. As shown in the scripture here quoted, an approved standing with God no longer requires observance of the sabbath requirement given to Israel.)

How did Sunday come to be the principal day of worship for much of Christendom?

Although Christ was resurrected on the first day of the week (now called Sunday), the Bible contains no instruction to set aside that day of the week as sacred.

“The retention of the old Pagan name of ‘*Dies Solis*,’ or ‘Sunday,’ for the weekly Christian festival, is, in great measure, owing to the union of Pagan and [so-called] Christian sentiment with which the first day of the week was recommended by Constantine [in an edict in 321 C.E.] to his subjects, Pagan and Christian alike, as the ‘venerable day of the Sun.’ . . . It was his mode of harmonizing the discordant religions of the Empire under one common institution.”—*Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church* (New York, 1871), A. P. Stanley, p. 291.

Was the requirement of sabbath keeping given to Adam and thus made binding on all of his offspring?

Jehovah God proceeded to rest as to his works of material, earthly creation after preparing the earth for human habitation. This is stated at Genesis 2:1-3. But nothing in the Bible record says that God directed Adam to keep the seventh day of each week as a sabbath.

responsibility of removing the stain of bloodguilt that Joab had brought on David's house. (1Ki 2:1, 5, 6) Shortly thereafter, Abner's slayer, Joab, was executed at Solomon's order.—1Ki 2:31-34.

Only one son of Abner is listed, Jaasiel, who was a leader in the tribe of Benjamin during David's reign. (1Ch 27:21) First Chronicles 26:28 also mentions Abner's contributions toward the tabernacle from spoils won as chief of the army.

ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION. See DISGUSTING THING, LOATHSOME THING.

ABORTION. The expulsion of an embryo or fetus before it can live on its own. Common use often distinguishes between *abortion* and *miscarriage*, the former being defined as the deliberate and induced emptying of a pregnant uterus, the latter being considered as the accidental and unavoidable interruption of pregnancy. The distinction between abortion and miscarriage is not made in the Bible; there the terms are used in a broader and interchangeable sense. The Hebrew *shakhal*, meaning "suffer an abortion" (Ex 23:26), is also rendered "bereave" (De 32:25), "bereave of children" (Le 26:22), "miscarry" (Ho 9:14), and "prove fruitless" (Mal 3:11). The Hebrew word *yoh'tse'th*, rendered "abortion" in Psalm 144:14, is from a root meaning "come out." (Compare Ge 27:30.) The expressions "miscarriage" and "one prematurely born" (Ps 58:8; Ec 6:3) render the Hebrew word *ne'phel*, which comes from the root *na-phal*, meaning "fall."—Compare Isa 26:18.

Unavoidable abortion or miscarriage may be caused by accident, infectious disease, mental or physical stress and strain, or because of a general organic weakness on the part of the mother. The waters near Jericho were death dealing, causing miscarriages, until Jehovah's prophet Elisha healed them.—2Ki 2:19-22.

Deliberately to induce abortion or miscarriage by artificial means, by the use of drugs, or by medical operation, the sole purpose of which is to avoid the birth of an unwanted child, is an act of high crime in the sight of God. Life as a precious gift from God is sacred. Hence God's law to Moses protected the life of an unborn baby against more than criminal abortion, for if in a fracas between men a pregnant woman suffered an accident fatal to her or the child, "then you must give soul for soul." (Ex 21:22-25) Of course, before applying that penalty, the circumstances and degree of deliberateness were taken into consideration by the judges. (Compare Nu 35:22-24, 31.) But emphasizing the seriousness of any deliberate attempt to cause injury, Dr. J. Glenn comments:

"The viable embryo in the uterus *IS* a human individual, and therefore destroying it, is a violation of the sixth commandment."—*The Bible and Modern Medicine*, 1963, p. 176.

Properly viewed, the fruitage of the womb is a blessing of Jehovah. (Le 26:9; Ps 127:3) Hence, in promising to prosper Israel, God gave assurance of successful culmination of pregnancy and the bringing forth of children, saying: "Neither a woman suffering an abortion nor a barren woman will exist in your land." (Ex 23:26) As indicated in the prayer of the righteous, on the other hand, evidence of God's disfavor to his enemies would be their having miscarrying wombs and their becoming like miscarriages that never see the sun.—Ps 58:8; Ho 9:14.

Job in his misery contemplated that it would have been better had he been "a hidden miscarriage." "Why from the womb did I not proceed to die?" this tormented man cried out. (Job 3:11-16) Solomon, too, reasoned that a prematurely expelled fetus is better off than the person who lives a long time but who never comes to enjoy life.—Ec 6:3.

Contagious abortion, a disease characterized by premature birth, may occur among animals such as cattle, horses, sheep, and goats. Accidental abortion due to neglect or disease of domestic animals has also been known since the days of the patriarchs Jacob and Job.—Ge 31:38; Job 21:10.

ABRAHAM (A'bra-ham) [Father of a Crowd (Multitude)]. The name given by Jehovah to Abram (meaning "Father Is High (Exalted)") when he was 99 years old, and when God was reaffirming His promise that Abraham's offspring would become many.—Ge 17:5.

Family Origin and Early History. Abraham was the tenth generation from Noah through Shem and was born 352 years after the Deluge, in 2188 B.C.E. Although listed first among the three sons of Terah, at Genesis 11:26, Abraham was not the firstborn. The Scriptures show that Terah was 70 years old when his first son was born, and that Abraham was born 60 years later when his father Terah was 130 years old. (Ge 11:32; 12:4) Evidently Abraham is listed first among his father's sons because of his outstanding faithfulness and prominence in the Scriptures, a practice that is followed in the case of several other outstanding men of faith such as Shem and Isaac.—Ge 5:32; 11:10; 1Ch 1:28.

Abraham was a native of the Chaldean city of Ur, a thriving metropolis located in the land of Shinar, near the present junction of the Euphrates

27 *Take Sides With Jehovah!*

(Exodus 32:26)

1. Once with confusion our sad hearts were filled,
Drinking the cup false religion distilled;
But with what happiness our hearts were thrilled
When of God's Kingdom we heard.

(CHORUS)

*Take sides with Jehovah;
Make him your delight.
He'll never forsake you;
Walk on in his light.
Tell, tell the glad tidings
Of freedom and peace.
His rule by Christ Jesus
Will ever increase.*

2. Now we're rejoicing in serving our God,
Spreading the seeds of his truth all abroad,
Helping our brothers God's virtues to laud,
Praising his great worthy name.

(Chorus)

3. We will not fear what the Devil can do.
Trusting Jehovah will carry us through.
Though they are many and though we are few,
God is our strength and our might.

(Chorus)

WEEK STARTING APRIL 21

Song 132 and Prayer

☐ **Congregation Bible Study:**

c/ chap. 6 ¶1-8 (30 min.)

☐ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Exodus 15-18 (10 min.)

No. 1: Exodus 15:20–16:5 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Why Christians Are Not Required to Keep the Sabbath—*rs* pp. 345-346 ¶3 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abortion—Life Is a Precious Gift From God—*it-1* p. 28 (5 min.)

☐ **Service Meeting:**

Song 27

10 min: “Congregate the People.” Questions and answers.

10 min: “A Special Invitation.” Questions and answers. Give all in attendance an invitation, if available, and discuss its contents. Inform the congregation when their campaign will begin, and outline local arrangements for covering the territory. Have a brief demonstration.

10 min: “Maintain Your Conduct Fine Among the Nations.” Questions and answers. Also discuss applicable points from “2014 Convention Reminders” and the letter to all congregations dated August 3, 2013, regarding safety precautions when attending spiritual programs.

Song 125 and Prayer

“Congregate the People”

¹ Shortly after leaving Egypt, Jehovah instructed Moses to “congregate the people” at Mount Sinai to hear His words so that they might fear Him and instruct their sons in His ways. (Deut. 4:10-13) What a memorable and faith-strengthening occasion that must have been! During the next few months, Jehovah’s people will gather at district and international conventions to be instructed by Jehovah. What must we do in order to benefit to the full?

² **“Be Ready”:** Jehovah commanded the Israelites to “be ready” for that historic gathering at Mount Sinai. (Ex. 19:10, 11) Likewise, careful preparation is needed by all who will attend the conventions, not just by those who will have a part on the program. For example, many will need to arrange to take time off from their secular job. Perhaps your situation is similar to Nehemiah’s. He wanted to leave his work as King Artaxerxes’ cupbearer in order to go to Je-

1. District and international conventions have what similarities to a momentous gathering of the Israelites shortly after they left Egypt?
2. What must we do to “be ready” for our convention?

2014 Convention Reminders

■ **Program Times:** The doors to the building will open at 8:00 a.m. The introductory music will begin at 9:20 a.m. all three days. At that time, all of us should go to our seats so that the program can begin in a dignified manner. The closing song and prayer will be introduced at 4:55 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and at 3:50 p.m. on Sunday.

■ **International Conventions:** Some areas will host international conventions. Keep in mind that the branch office has invited specific congregations and foreign delegates after carefully calculating the number of seats, parking spaces, and hotel rooms available. Overcrowding may occur if publishers attend an international convention to which

they have not been invited. If circumstances require you to attend a convention other than the one to which you are assigned, you should not choose an international convention.

■ **Parking:** At all convention sites where we control the parking, the spaces will be available at no charge on a first-come, first-served basis. Parking is usually limited, so carpooling should be done to the extent possible. Only those with a license plate or placard for the disabled will be allowed to park in the area reserved for such ones.

■ **Seat Saving:** When the doors to the facility are opened each morning, please do not rush to the seating area of your preference as if competing with fellow attenders. A self-sacrificing spirit that moves us to seek the

rusalem and help rebuild its walls, but he knew that the king might not be agreeable. Nehemiah said a prayer and then courageously presented his graciously worded request. The king allowed him to leave and even gave support to the building project! (Neh. 2:1-9) In addition to requesting time off from your employer, have you confirmed your travel arrangements and accommodations? The elders will be happy to help any who may need assistance. Plan to arrive early for each session, and be ready to “pay more than the usual attention” to what you will hear.—Heb. 2:1.

³ Another important facet of our readiness involves preparing our heart so that we may listen and learn. (Ezra 7:10) The convention program will be posted in advance on the jw.org Web site and will list the titles for all the talks along with one or two key scriptures for each one. This provides excellent material to consider during our Family Worship evening in the weeks leading up to our assigned convention. Some publishers print out the program and use it for taking brief notes during the convention.

3. What will help us to prepare our heart for the program?

good of others identifies us as true Christians and moves onlookers to praise God. (John 13:34, 35; 1 Cor. 13:4, 5; 1 Pet. 2:12) Seats may be saved only for those living in your home or traveling in your vehicle or for your current Bible students. Special seating has been provided for the elderly and the infirm. Since this seating is limited, only one or two persons directly assisting the elderly or infirm individual may sit with him.

■ **Noon Meal:** Please bring a lunch rather than leave the convention site to obtain a meal during the noon break. A small cooler that can be placed *under* a seat may be used. Large family-size picnic coolers and glass containers are not permitted in the convention facility.

■ **Donations:** We can show our appreciation for the convention arrangements by making voluntary contributions to the worldwide work at the convention. Any checks should

⁴ **‘Teach Your Sons’:** One of the stated purposes of the convention at Mount Sinai was for Israelite parents to “teach their sons.” (Deut. 4:10) The convention gives parents an excellent opportunity to do the same. Parents should have their children sit with them during the sessions and help them pay attention. At the end of each day and later during their family worship, families can discuss the program together.

⁵ The momentous convention at Mount Sinai helped the Israelites to appreciate their unique privilege of being God’s people. (Deut. 4:7, 8) Our upcoming convention is designed to benefit us in a similar way. For three days we will be able to step out of the harsh wilderness of Satan’s world and enjoy spiritual refreshment and upbuilding association in our spiritual paradise. (Isa. 35:7-9) With Jehovah’s day drawing near, may we not forsake this opportunity to meet together for an interchange of encouragement!—Heb. 10:24, 25.

4. How can parents use the convention to teach their children?

5. How will we benefit from attending the upcoming convention?

be made payable to “Christian Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses.” Donations can also be made by means of a debit or credit card.

■ **Medication:** If you require prescription medication, please be sure to bring an adequate supply with you, since none will be available at the convention. Diabetic syringes and needles must be disposed of properly as hazardous waste and not in trash receptacles at the convention facility or hotel.

■ **Safety Precautions:** Please be especially mindful of preventing potential injuries that can be caused by slipping and tripping. Each year injuries occur that are related to footwear, especially high-heeled shoes. It is best to choose modest, well-fitting shoes that will allow you to walk safely on ramps, stairs, gratings, and so forth.

■ **Hearing Impaired:** The program will be broadcast in the auditorium on an FM radio frequency. To hear it, you will need to bring a

A Special Invitation

¹ If you were planning a special meal for friends or family, one that required much effort and expense to prepare, you would likely be enthusiastic when extending invitations. Similarly, much work has gone into preparing the spiritual feast that will be presented at our 2014 district and international conventions. Beginning three weeks before the start of our convention, we will have the privilege of inviting others to attend. What will help us to extend the invitations with enthusiasm?

² We will be moved to have a full share in the campaign if we reflect appreciatively on how much we personally benefit from the spiritual banquet that Jehovah provides at our conventions. (Isa. 65:13, 14) We should remember, too, that our annual campaign yields results. Some people we invite will attend the convention with us. Regardless of how many respond, however, our diligent efforts during

1. When will the invitation campaign for the 2014 conventions begin?
2. What will move us to have a full share in the campaign?

small battery-operated FM receiver with earphones.

■ **Baby Strollers and Lawn Chairs:** Baby strollers and lawn chairs should not be brought to the convention site. However, child-safety seats are acceptable if they can be secured in a seat next to the parents.

■ **Fragrances:** Most conventions take place in enclosed areas with mechanical ventilation. Therefore, it would be loving on our part to limit the use of strong fragrances, colognes, and perfumes that may cause reactions in people with respiratory or related problems.—1 Cor. 10:24.

■ **Please Follow Up (S-43) Forms:** A *Please Follow Up* form should be used to provide information regarding any interest found through informal witnessing during the convention. Completed forms may be submitted to the Book Room or given to your congregation secretary on your return home.

the campaign will bring praise to Jehovah and reflect his generosity.—Ps. 145:3, 7; Rev. 22:17.

³ Each body of elders should determine how the congregation can give the invitations wide distribution, including whether to leave them at not-at-homes or offer them in public witnessing within the territory. On weekends the magazines should be offered along with the invitation when appropriate. If the first Saturday of the month falls within the dates of the campaign, emphasis should be placed on distributing invitations rather than on starting Bible studies. After the campaign concludes, how happy we will be to know that we participated enthusiastically and that we invited as many people as possible to join us at the spiritual banquet that Jehovah provided!

3. How will the invitations be distributed?

What Will You Say?

After giving a customary greeting, you might say: “We are involved in a global campaign to invite people to a very important event. The date, time, and address are printed on this invitation.”

■ **Restaurants:** Honor Jehovah’s name by your fine conduct at restaurants. Dress in a way that befits a Christian minister. Leave an appropriate tip if this is customary.

■ **Hotels:**

- (1) Please do not reserve more rooms than you will actually use, and do not have more people stay in your room than what is allowed.
- (2) Do not cancel your reservation except for an emergency situation, and notify the hotel as soon as it occurs so that others needing accommodations can use the room. (Matt. 5:37) If you do have to cancel your reservation, be sure to get a cancellation number. If you cancel a room less than 48 hours ahead of time, your deposit will not be refunded.
- (3) Please note that if you use a debit or credit card when registering at a hotel, it is standard practice for the hotel to place a hold on funds in your account to cover your to-

WEEK STARTING APRIL 21

Song 132 and Prayer

☐ **Congregation Bible Study:**

c/ chap. 6 ¶1-8 (30 min.)

☐ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Exodus 15-18 (10 min.)

No. 1: Exodus 15:20–16:5 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Why Christians Are Not Required to Keep the Sabbath—rs pp. 345-346 ¶3 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abortion—Life Is a Precious Gift From God—*it-1* p. 28 (5 min.)

☐ **Service Meeting:**

Song 27

10 min: “Congregate the People.” Questions and answers.

10 min: “A Special Invitation.” Questions and answers. Give all in attendance an invitation, if available, and discuss its contents. Inform the congregation when their campaign will begin, and outline local arrangements for covering the territory. Have a brief demonstration.

10 min: “Maintain Your Conduct Fine Among the Nations.” Questions and answers. Also discuss applicable points from “2014 Convention Reminders” and the letter to all congregations dated August 3, 2013, regarding safety precautions when attending spiritual programs.

Song 125 and Prayer

“Congregate the People”

¹ Shortly after leaving Egypt, Jehovah instructed Moses to “congregate the people” at Mount Sinai to hear His words so that they might fear Him and instruct their sons in His ways. (Deut. 4:10-13) What a memorable and faith-strengthening occasion that must have been! During the next few months, Jehovah’s people will gather at district and international conventions to be instructed by Jehovah. What must we do in order to benefit to the full?

² **“Be Ready”:** Jehovah commanded the Israelites to “be ready” for that historic gathering at Mount Sinai. (Ex. 19:10, 11) Likewise, careful preparation is needed by all who will attend the conventions, not just by those who will have a part on the program. For example, many will need to arrange to take time off from their secular job. Perhaps your situation is similar to Nehemiah’s. He wanted to leave his work as King Artaxerxes’ cupbearer in order to go to Je-

1. District and international conventions have what similarities to a momentous gathering of the Israelites shortly after they left Egypt?

2. What must we do to “be ready” for our convention?

2014 Convention Reminders

■ **Program Times:** The doors to the building will open at 8:00 a.m. The introductory music will begin at 9:20 a.m. all three days. At that time, all of us should go to our seats so that the program can begin in a dignified manner. The closing song and prayer will be introduced at 4:55 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and at 3:50 p.m. on Sunday.

■ **International Conventions:** Some areas will host international conventions. Keep in mind that the branch office has invited specific congregations and foreign delegates after carefully calculating the number of seats, parking spaces, and hotel rooms available. Overcrowding may occur if publishers attend an international convention to which

they have not been invited. If circumstances require you to attend a convention other than the one to which you are assigned, you should not choose an international convention.

■ **Parking:** At all convention sites where we control the parking, the spaces will be available at no charge on a first-come, first-served basis. Parking is usually limited, so carpooling should be done to the extent possible. Only those with a license plate or placard for the disabled will be allowed to park in the area reserved for such ones.

■ **Seat Saving:** When the doors to the facility are opened each morning, please do not rush to the seating area of your preference as if competing with fellow attenders. A self-sacrificing spirit that moves us to seek the

rusalem and help rebuild its walls, but he knew that the king might not be agreeable. Nehemiah said a prayer and then courageously presented his graciously worded request. The king allowed him to leave and even gave support to the building project! (Neh. 2:1-9) In addition to requesting time off from your employer, have you confirmed your travel arrangements and accommodations? The elders will be happy to help any who may need assistance. Plan to arrive early for each session, and be ready to “pay more than the usual attention” to what you will hear.—Heb. 2:1.

³ Another important facet of our readiness involves preparing our heart so that we may listen and learn. (Ezra 7:10) The convention program will be posted in advance on the jw.org Web site and will list the titles for all the talks along with one or two key scriptures for each one. This provides excellent material to consider during our Family Worship evening in the weeks leading up to our assigned convention. Some publishers print out the program and use it for taking brief notes during the convention.

3. What will help us to prepare our heart for the program?

good of others identifies us as true Christians and moves onlookers to praise God. (John 13:34, 35; 1 Cor. 13:4, 5; 1 Pet. 2:12) Seats may be saved only for those living in your home or traveling in your vehicle or for your current Bible students. Special seating has been provided for the elderly and the infirm. Since this seating is limited, only one or two persons directly assisting the elderly or infirm individual may sit with him.

■ **Noon Meal:** Please bring a lunch rather than leave the convention site to obtain a meal during the noon break. A small cooler that can be placed *under* a seat may be used. Large family-size picnic coolers and glass containers are not permitted in the convention facility.

■ **Donations:** We can show our appreciation for the convention arrangements by making voluntary contributions to the worldwide work at the convention. Any checks should

⁴ **‘Teach Your Sons’:** One of the stated purposes of the convention at Mount Sinai was for Israelite parents to “teach their sons.” (Deut. 4:10) The convention gives parents an excellent opportunity to do the same. Parents should have their children sit with them during the sessions and help them pay attention. At the end of each day and later during their family worship, families can discuss the program together.

⁵ The momentous convention at Mount Sinai helped the Israelites to appreciate their unique privilege of being God’s people. (Deut. 4:7, 8) Our upcoming convention is designed to benefit us in a similar way. For three days we will be able to step out of the harsh wilderness of Satan’s world and enjoy spiritual refreshment and upbuilding association in our spiritual paradise. (Isa. 35:7-9) With Jehovah’s day drawing near, may we not forsake this opportunity to meet together for an interchange of encouragement!—Heb. 10:24, 25.

4. How can parents use the convention to teach their children?

5. How will we benefit from attending the upcoming convention?

be made payable to “Christian Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses.” Donations can also be made by means of a debit or credit card.

■ **Medication:** If you require prescription medication, please be sure to bring an adequate supply with you, since none will be available at the convention. Diabetic syringes and needles must be disposed of properly as hazardous waste and not in trash receptacles at the convention facility or hotel.

■ **Safety Precautions:** Please be especially mindful of preventing potential injuries that can be caused by slipping and tripping. Each year injuries occur that are related to footwear, especially high-heeled shoes. It is best to choose modest, well-fitting shoes that will allow you to walk safely on ramps, stairs, gratings, and so forth.

■ **Hearing Impaired:** The program will be broadcast in the auditorium on an FM radio frequency. To hear it, you will need to bring a

A Special Invitation

¹ If you were planning a special meal for friends or family, one that required much effort and expense to prepare, you would likely be enthusiastic when extending invitations. Similarly, much work has gone into preparing the spiritual feast that will be presented at our 2014 district and international conventions. Beginning three weeks before the start of our convention, we will have the privilege of inviting others to attend. What will help us to extend the invitations with enthusiasm?

² We will be moved to have a full share in the campaign if we reflect appreciatively on how much we personally benefit from the spiritual banquet that Jehovah provides at our conventions. (Isa. 65:13, 14) We should remember, too, that our annual campaign yields results. Some people we invite will attend the convention with us. Regardless of how many respond, however, our diligent efforts during

1. When will the invitation campaign for the 2014 conventions begin?
2. What will move us to have a full share in the campaign?

small battery-operated FM receiver with ear-phones.

■ **Baby Strollers and Lawn Chairs:** Baby strollers and lawn chairs should not be brought to the convention site. However, child-safety seats are acceptable if they can be secured in a seat next to the parents.

■ **Fragrances:** Most conventions take place in enclosed areas with mechanical ventilation. Therefore, it would be loving on our part to limit the use of strong fragrances, colognes, and perfumes that may cause reactions in people with respiratory or related problems.—1 Cor. 10:24.

■ **Please Follow Up (S-43) Forms:** A *Please Follow Up* form should be used to provide information regarding any interest found through informal witnessing during the convention. Completed forms may be submitted to the Book Room or given to your congregation secretary on your return home.

the campaign will bring praise to Jehovah and reflect his generosity.—Ps. 145:3, 7; Rev. 22:17.

³ Each body of elders should determine how the congregation can give the invitations wide distribution, including whether to leave them at not-at-homes or offer them in public witnessing within the territory. On weekends the magazines should be offered along with the invitation when appropriate. If the first Saturday of the month falls within the dates of the campaign, emphasis should be placed on distributing invitations rather than on starting Bible studies. After the campaign concludes, how happy we will be to know that we participated enthusiastically and that we invited as many people as possible to join us at the spiritual banquet that Jehovah provided!

3. How will the invitations be distributed?

What Will You Say?

After giving a customary greeting, you might say: “We are involved in a global campaign to invite people to a very important event. The date, time, and address are printed on this invitation.”

■ **Restaurants:** Honor Jehovah’s name by your fine conduct at restaurants. Dress in a way that befits a Christian minister. Leave an appropriate tip if this is customary.

■ **Hotels:**

- (1) Please do not reserve more rooms than you will actually use, and do not have more people stay in your room than what is allowed.
- (2) Do not cancel your reservation except for an emergency situation, and notify the hotel as soon as it occurs so that others needing accommodations can use the room. (Matt. 5:37) If you do have to cancel your reservation, be sure to get a cancellation number. If you cancel a room less than 48 hours ahead of time, your deposit will not be refunded.
- (3) Please note that if you use a debit or credit card when registering at a hotel, it is standard practice for the hotel to place a hold on funds in your account to cover your to-

“Maintain Your Conduct Fine Among the Nations”

¹ We attract the attention of the public during our conventions each year, so it is important that by our conduct we properly represent the God we worship. (Lev. 20:26) Our good manners as well as our dress and grooming should clearly identify us as Christ’s true followers. As we attend the upcoming district or international conventions, how can we ‘maintain our conduct fine among the nations’ and thus give glory to our heavenly Father?—1 Pet. 2:12.

² **Display the Christian Personality:** The love we show toward one another and the way we deal with “those on the outside” stand in stark contrast to the dominant spirit of the world. (Col. 3:10; 4:5; 2 Tim. 3:1-5) We should be kind and patient when dealing with hotel personnel and restaurant workers, even if problems arise. Good manners also dictate that we

1. Why is it important for us to maintain good conduct during the upcoming conventions?
2. What opportunities to display the Christian personality will we have during the convention?

tal room cost, plus any possible damages or incidentals during your stay. You will not be able to use any of those funds until your account is settled within a few days after you depart.

- (4) Take a luggage cart only when you are ready to use it, and return it immediately so that others may use it.
- (5) If it is the custom in your country, tip hotel workers when they carry your luggage, and leave a tip for the housekeeper.
- (6) Cook only in rooms where cooking is permitted.
- (7) Do not abuse any complimentary breakfast, coffee, or ice provisions that are made available for guests to consume while they are at the hotel by taking these items to the convention.
- (8) At all times, display the fruitage of the spirit when dealing with the hotel staff. They are caring for a large number of

leave the customary tip for those providing personal services.

³ Parents should closely supervise their children at the convention site, in restaurants, and at the hotel. (Prov. 29:15) The manager of one hotel restaurant said to a couple: “We just love you people. Your families and your children are so well-mannered and polite. All the staff were talking, and we wish that you were staying here every weekend.”

⁴ **Modest Dress:** Our dress during the convention should be appropriate and modest, not reflecting the extreme styles common in the world. (1 Tim. 2:9) Even when checking in and out of the hotel and during times of leisure before and after the sessions, we want to avoid an overly casual or slovenly appearance. Thus we will be proud to wear our convention badge and not be embarrassed to give a witness when we have an opportunity. Our appearance and fine conduct while attending the upcoming conventions will not only attract honesthearted people to the Bible’s life-saving message but it will also bring joy to Jehovah.—Zeph. 3:17.

3. What reminder is given to parents, and why?
4. While in the convention city, what attention should we give to our appearance?

guests and appreciate our kindness, patience, and reasonableness.

- (9) Parents should supervise their children at all times around the hotel, including the elevators, swimming pool, lobby area, exercise room, and so forth.
- (10) The room rate shown on the *Recommended Lodging List* is the full price per day, excluding tax. If you are overcharged, refuse these charges and inform the Rooming Department at the convention as soon as possible.
- (11) If a problem arises with your hotel room, inform the Rooming Department while at the convention so that they can assist you.

■ **Volunteer Service:** Any who wish to volunteer should report to the Volunteer Service Department at the convention. Children under 16 years of age can also make a fine contribution by working under the direction of a parent, guardian, or other adult approved by a parent or guardian.

*Loyally Submitting
to Theocratic Order*
(1 Corinthians 14:33)

1. As Jehovah's people sound throughout the earth
Truths about the Kingdom and its priceless worth,
Theocratic order they must all obey
And remain united, loyalty display.

(CHORUS)

*Loyal submission in recognition,
This to our God we owe.
He gives protection, tender affection,
Loyalty to him we show.*

2. God provides his steward and his active force.
These will ever guide us in our Christian course.
So may we be steadfast, seeking God to please,
Loyally proclaiming all his wise decrees!

(Chorus)